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Attorney(s) Niedweske Barber Hager, LLC	OF REE (fare.		
Office Address 98 Washington Street		Superior Court of		
Town, State, Zip Code Morristown, NJ 07960	New Jersey	r [
	MERCER	COUNTY		
Telephone Number (974) 401-0064	LAW	_DIVISION		
Attorney(s) for Plaintiff;	Docket No: MER-L-1494-13	,		
	- Indiana			
Plaintiff(s)	CIVIL ACTIO	ON :		
Vs.	SUMMONS	;		
STATE OF NEW JERSEY, NEW JERSEY STATE	SOMMON	•		
JUDICIARY, JOHN ITALIANO AND PATRICK KOBLE Defendant(s)		!		
From The State of New Jersey To The Defendant(s) Named Above:				
The plaintiff, named above, has filed a lawsuit against you in the to this summons states the basis for this lawsuit. If you dispute this coanswer or motion and proof of service with the deputy clerk of the Suffrom the date you received this summons, not counting the date you received this summons, not counting the date you received this available in the Civil Division Management of the Superior Court is available in the Civil Division Managements://www.iudiciary.state.ni.us/pro se/10153_deptyclerklawref.pdf.) file your written answer or motion and proof of service with the Clerk	omplaint, you or your attorney must perior Court in the county listed above eccived it. (A directory of the addressment Office in the county listed above If the complaint is one in foreclosure	file a written; ve within 35 days sses of each deputy e and online at e, then you must		
Box 971, Trenton, NJ 08625-0971. A filing fee payable to the Treasu				

If you do not file and serve a written answer or motion within 35 days, the court may enter a judgment against you for the relief plaintiff demands, plus interest and costs of suit. If judgment is entered against you, the Sheriff may seize your money, wages or property to pay all or part of the judgment.

Information Statement (available from the deputy clerk of the Superior Court) must accompany your answer or motion when it is filed. You must also send a copy of your answer or motion to plaintiff's attorney whose name and address appear above, or to plaintiff, if no attorney is named above. A telephone call will not protect your rights; you must file and serve a written answer or motion (with fee of \$135.00 and completed Case Information Statement) if you want the court to hear your

If you cannot afford an attorney, you may call the Legal Services office in the county where you live or the Legal Services of New Jersey Statewide Hotline at 1-888-LSNJ-LAW (1-888-576-5529). If you do not have an attorney and are not eligible for free legal assistance, you may obtain a referral to an attorney by calling one of the Lawyer Referral Services. A directory with contact information for local Legal Services Offices and Lawyer Referral Services is available in the Civil Division Management Office in the county listed above and online at http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/prose/10153_deptyclerklawref.pdf.

10/ Elizabeth ann Strom Eso

DATED:	07/22/201	. 3	

defense.

Name of Defendant to Be Served: New Jersey State Judiciary

Address of Defendant to Be Served: 25 West Market Street, Hughes Justice Complex, Trenton, NJ 08625

NIEDWESKE BARBER HAGER, LLC

98 Washington Street Morristown, New Jersey 07960 973-401-0064 973-401-0061

www.n-blaw.com
Attorneys for Plaintiff

CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT
SUPERIOR COURT OF N.J.
MERCER COUNTY
RECEIVED AND FILED

JUL 12 2013 Den Kegan

SUE REGIAN DEPUTY CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT

Plaintiff,

v.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY, NEW JERSEY STATE JUDICIARY, JOHN ITALIANO, Individually and in his Official Capacity, and PATRICK KOBLE, Individually and in his Official Capacity,

Defendants.

LAW DIVISION - MERCER COUNTY DOCKET NO.: // //

Civil Action

COMPLAINT AND JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff ("Plaintiff "), by way of complaint against Defendants

State of New Jersey, New Jersey State Judiciary, John Italiano ("Italiano") and Patrick Koble

("Koble")(hereinafter collectively referred to as "Defendants"), say:

THE PARTIES

- At all times relevant, Plaintiff was employed by Defendant State of New Jersey.
- During all times relevant to this Complaint, Defendant State of New Jersey was
 the employer of Plaintiff as that term is defined by the NJLAD.
- Upon information and belief, Defendant Italiano resides at 195 Knotty Oak Drive,
 Town of Mount Laurel, State of New Jersey. During all times relevant to this Complaint,

Defendant Italiano was and is the Administrator, Support Services, Administrative Offices of the Court.

- At all times relevant, Defendant Italiano was Plaintiff
- 5. Upon information and belief, Defendant Koble resides at 49 Leisure Lane, Town of Levittown, State of Pennsylvania. During all times relevant to this Complaint, Defendant Koble was and is an Administrative Supervisor 1, Office Service.
 - 6. At all times relevant, Defendant Koble was Plaintiff

STATEMENT OF FACTS

- At all times relevant, Plaintiff was a Supervisor 1 with the Office of Management and Administrative Services, Office Services Unit.
- 8. Throughout his twenty-five (25) year career with the Judiciary, he performed in a satisfactorily manner and had no disciplinary issues or complaints against him.
 - Plaintiff is gay.
- On or about October 24, 1997, Plaintiff was diagnosed with Human Immunodeficiency Virus ("HIV").
- 11. In or around that time, Plaintiff was at work when he received a call from the Red Cross Blood Center.
- 12. Because Plaintiff and State of Stat
- 13. Thereafter, Defendant Koble subjected Plaintiff to a hostile work environment based on his sexual orientation, viz:
 - a. Defendant Köble referred to Plaintiff in such a derogatory and demeaning terms as "Clarabelle", "Flamer", and "Flames".

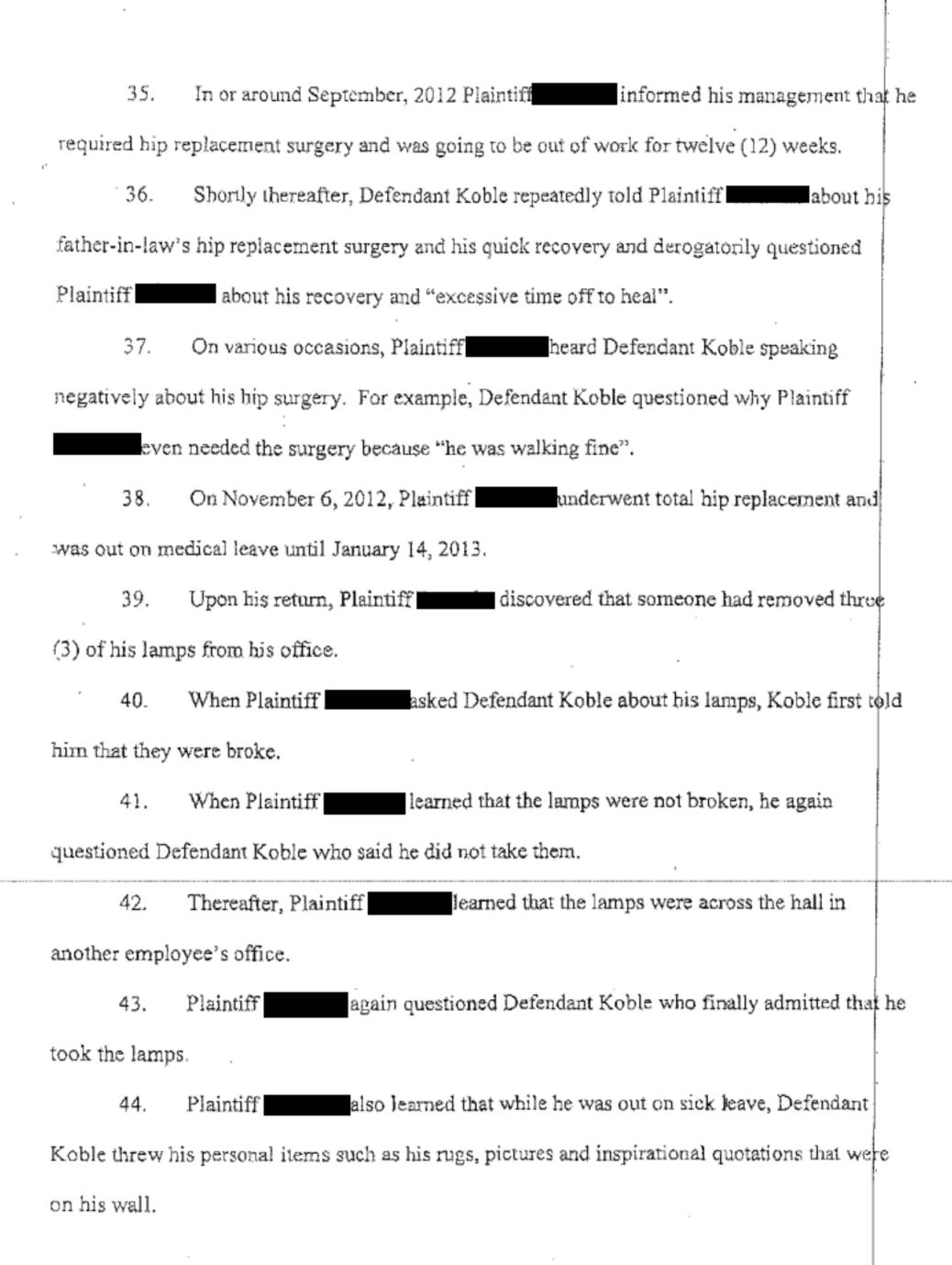
- b. Defendant Koble made statements to the effect that, "when you walk, flames come out from between your thighs". c. On numerous occasions, Defendant Koble told Plaintiff "to get under my desk and suck my dick". d. On repeated occasions, Defendant Koble would yell across the open floor that 's "boyfriend was on the phone". Plaintiff found a piece of paper taped to his desk with a printout stating "Fag Sanctuary" and on the pole behind his chair was a picture of closet doors and above those closet doors was a printout stating "COME OUT, COME OUT". Defendant Koble would compare Plaintiff "s condition to "Animal Aids" and comment that he was surprised Plaintiff was not dead yet. On numerous occasions, Defendant Koble would inappropriately ask if Plaintiff acquired HIV "because you are gay". Defendant Koble made a comment "oh are you going there [Brigantine, New Jersey beach] because they have a gay sanctuary". Defendant Koble told Paula Savage, secretary to Assistant Director of OMAS "don't try to date, you know he is gay". Defendant Koble consistently told Plaintiff that he could not stand his voice and he wanted to punch him in the face. directly objected to Defendant Koble's conduct, When Plaintiff 14. Defendant Koble threatened to write him up if he went to management. words to the effect that Defendant Koble also told Plaintiff
- 15. Defendant Koble also told Plaintiff words to the effect that "management was watching him so he should keep to himself".

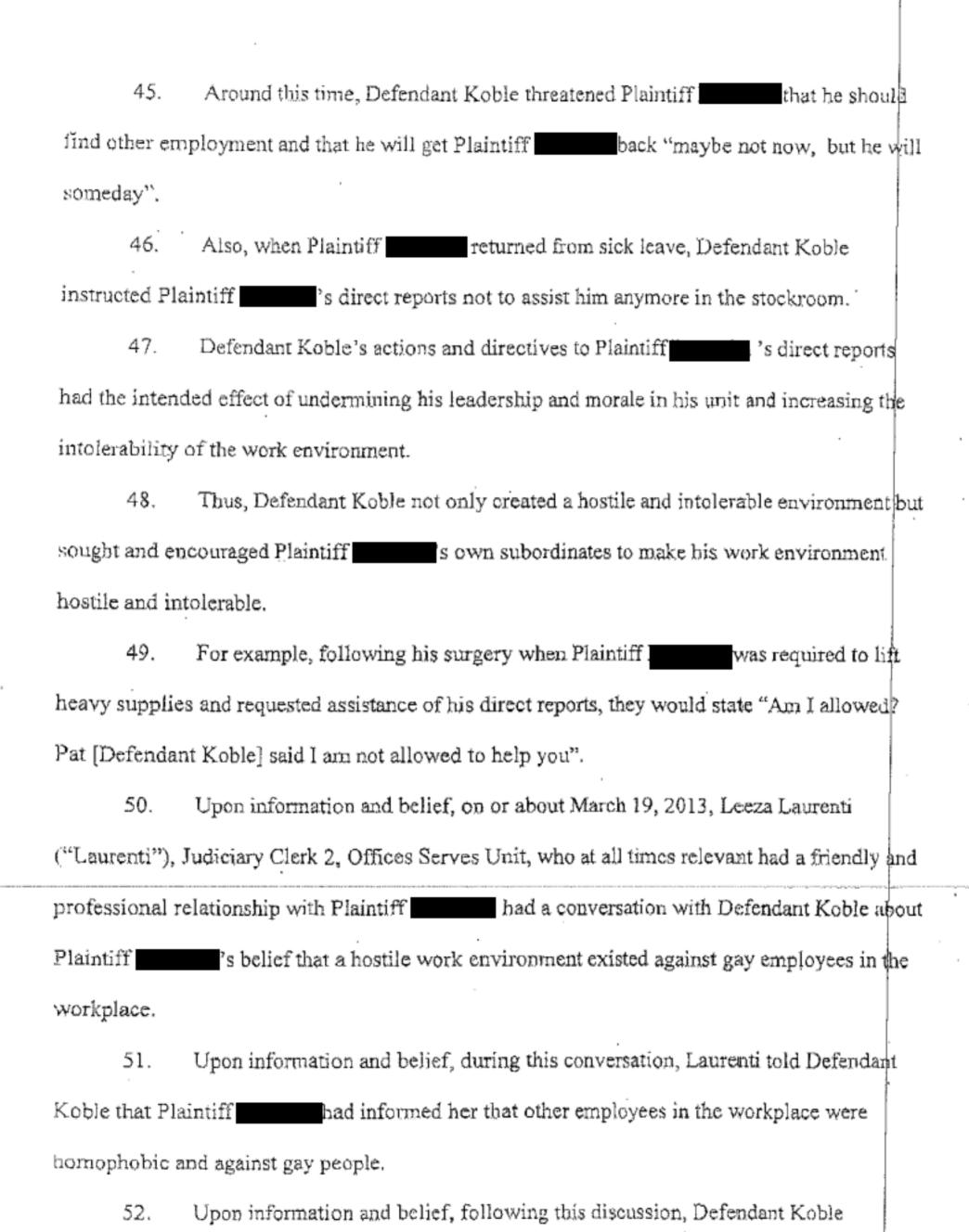
- 16. In an effort to silence Plaintiff and dissuade him from pursuing a complaint, Defendant Koble threatened him with termination for theft of services based on occasions when Plaintiff arrived to work late over twelve (12) years ago and which was admonished and closed.
- 17. On September 27, 2011, Plaintiff formally notified various upper managers of the hostile work environment:

On the morning of July 13, 2011, there was a piece of paper taped to my desk below my keyboard that was a printout stating "FAG SANCTUARY" and on the pole behind my chair was a picture of closet doors, above the closet doors it was also a printout stating "COME OUT, COME OUT", the only employees in before me is Pat Koble, Keith Lovett, Parrish Adams, one, two or all three of them are guilty for doing this. I notified my supervisor of this, Ernie Corner, Bobbie Battle and Natonya Phillips. Myself, Leeza Laurenti and Bob Bastian are all offended by these statements and pictures. I have their permission to speak on their behalf.

- 18. Thereafter, Plaintiff had a meeting with upper management and once again complained that nothing was being done about the harassment and that Defendant Koble was continuing with the hostile environment.
- 19. For example, in Plaintiff service, Defendant Koble loudly stated to Keith Lovett as to how good he was sucking on a cherry stick and then proceeded to laugh.
- 20. When Plaintiff informed upper management of that specific comment, Shelley Webster, Director of Office and Management Administrative Services, said words to the effect, "I used to work in a kitchen and let's keep the kitchen talk to a minimum".
- 21. In that same meeting, in defense of his inappropriate conduct, Defendant Koble told the group of upper managers that he and Plaintiff were "like a husband and wife bickering".
 - 22. Plaintiff immediately objected to that inappropriate comment.

- 23. Plaintiff also also notified Defendant Italiano, Ernie Comer ("Comer"),
 Chief of Court Access Services, and Bobbie Battle ("Battle"), Chief Judiciary EEO/AA Officer,
 and Natonya Phillips ("Phillips"), Investigator EEO/AA, of this the hostile environment.
- 24. In a meeting with Battle and Phillips, Battle advised Plaintiff that Defendant Koble was his boss and that "it is his [Defendant Koble's] way or the highway".
- 25. During that meeting in Battle's office, Plaintiff broke down because of management's indifference to him.
- 26. Plaintiff was was told by Battle and Phillips that the complaint would be addressed during another "on-going investigation", but it was not.
- 27. Plaintiff was also told by Battle not to file an incident report as it would hurt him in an "on-going investigation".
- 28. Ultimately, Defendants did not conduct an investigation of Plaintiff
 complaints and allowed the hostile environment to continue.
 - 29. Thereafter, Plaintiff was subject to a pattern of retaliatory discipline.
- 30. On March 14, 2012, Plaintiff called and spoke with Defendant Italiano advising him that he was being harassed again and wanted to be removed from the unit.
- 31. Defendant Italiano did nothing about it but instead served Plaintiff with a 3-day suspension on March 20, 2012.
- 32. For example, on or about August 17, 2012, Plaintiff was instructed by Ernie Comer that he wanted to see all suspicious mail before contacting the State Police.
 - Plaintiff did as he was told but was subsequently disciplined for it.
- 34. On September 17th, Plaintiff was issued a Notice of Written Reprimand "for neglect of duty for not following established policies and procedures for handling suspicious mail as established by the New-Jersey State Police".

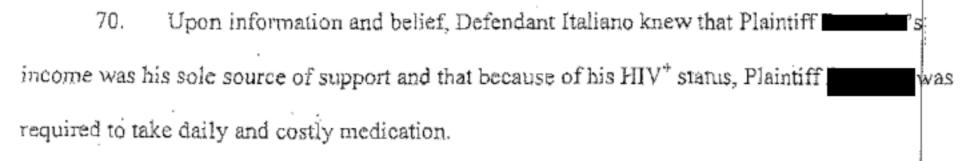




- 53. At that meeting, both Defendants improperly influenced and encouraged Laurenti to file a complaint against Plaintiff for sexual orientation discrimination.
- 54. Upon information and belief, Laurenti spoke to Battle and Wendy Schermer ("Schermer"), EEO Investigator, twice and advised them that she did not want to file the complaint against Plaintiff under "sexual orientation".
- 55. Upon information and belief, during both conversations with Battle and Schemer,

 Laurenti was advised that she had to pick a charge or they could not take her complaint.
- 56. Thereafter, on March 20, 2013, Laurenti filed a complaint against Plaintiff alleging inappropriate treatment based on her affectional and sexual orientation.
- 57. In or around this time, both individual Defendants took a survey of all of the employees in the office regarding workplace problems and issues, but excluded Plaintiff from the survey.
- 58. Upon information and belief, Defendants Koble and Italiano sought to improperly influence and encourage other employees to negatively portray and evaluate Plaintiff
- 59. Also, on March 20, 2013, at the behest of Defendants Koble and Italiano, Plaintiff received a Preliminary Notice of Minor Discipline 3-Day Suspension for alleged events, some of which occurred six (6) weeks earlier. This was yet another retaliatory and bogus discipline.
- 60. Given the increasing hostility and management's failure to address his previous complaints, on or about March 20, 2013, Plaintiff began working with Fenix Manning, EEO/AA Investigator, on filing his complaint.
- On March 25, 2013 Plaintiff In filed a complaint with the Judiciary
 EEO/AA office against Defendant Koble alleging discrimination and retaliation.

- 62. In the March 25, 2013 EEO/AA complaint, Plaintiff requested "to be removed from the Unit and placed in another office outside of OMAS. I feel at this point that the manager/co-manager relationship within this unit is beyond repair. Pat's actions and instructions to the staff has [sic] demeaned my character, to rebuild this would be impossible".
- 63. Along with that EEO/AA complaint, Plaintiff provided a witness list outlining the pertinent knowledge of each individual regarding the harassing and discriminatory environment.
- 64. Thereafter, Plaintiff was subjected to additional retaliation and discrimination from Defendants Koble and Italiano.
- 65. On or about April 17, 2013 when Defendant Koble was questioning Plaintiff
 about his complaint, Defendant Koble called Plaintiff
 a liar and threatened to fire him.
- 66. Despite this apparent bias and conflict, the State Defendant failed to intervene or remediate the hostility.
- 67. On May 20, 2013, Defendant Italiano issued Plaintiff an Immediate Suspension Without Pay Decision because he allegedly sought to have Laurenti withdraw her EEO/AA complaint.
 - 68. The suspension letter stated:
 - After reviewing your charges and your response, I have determined that you should be immediately suspended <u>without</u> pay because an immediate suspension is necessary to maintain the effective direction of public service.
- 69. Notably, Plaintiff simulate's immediate suspension without pay violated the New Jersey Administrative Code and prior practice.



- 71. Nonetheless, he engaged in this willful and wanton conduct to silence Plaintiff and further dissuade him from complaining.
- 72. On May 29th, Plaintiff was served with a Preliminary Notice of Disciplinary Action charging him with Insubordination, Conduct Unbecoming of a Public Employee, and Other Sufficient Cause for allegedly initiating conversations with Laurenti on May 21st and May 22nd to pressure her to drop the EEO complaint against him.
- 73. On June 19, 2013, Plaintiff was served with a Final Notice of Major Discipline Removal for the May 21st and May 22nd allegations.
- 74. The notice outlined Plaintiff 's immediate suspension and management's intent to seek his removal of employment.
- 75. Based on the continuing hostility and retaliation coupled with Defendants' failure to address and remediate it, Plaintiff was subjected to an intolerable environment that negatively impacted his physical and mental health.
- 76. As a result of this intolerable environment, Plaintiff was forced to quit his job.

FIRST COUNT (NJLAD - Hostile Work Environment - Sexual Orientation)

- 77. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
- 78. The conduct and comments previously set forth occurred because of Plaintiff's sexual orientation.

- 79. The conduct and comments were severe and pervasive enough to make a reasonable person believe the working conditions were altered and that the working environment was intimidating and harassing.
 - 80. Despite Plaintiff 's complaints and repeated attempts to stop the hostility,

 Defendants continued to act and otherwise failed to remediate the hostility.
 - 81. As a result of Defendants' failures and inactions, they are liable for all damages resulting from the hostile work environment.
 - 82. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions and inactions, Plaintiff
 has and continues to suffer loss of income, loss of benefits, and other financial losses.
 - 83. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions and inactions, Plaintiff has and continues to suffer pain, suffering, and emotional distress.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, personal physical injury, exacerbation of his physical injuries and condition, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

SECOND COUNT (NJLAD - Hostile Work Environment-Disability)

- 84. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
 - Plaintiff
 s HIV⁺ diagnosis is a disability under the NJLAD.
- 86. The conduct and comments previously set forth occurred because of Plaintiff
 's disability.

- 87. The conduct and comments were severe and pervasive enough to make a reasonable person believe the working conditions were altered and that the working environment was intimidating and harassing.
- 88. Despite Plaintiff 's complaints and repeated attempts to stop the hostility,

 Defendants continued to act and otherwise failed to remediate the hostility.
- 89. As a result of Defendants' failures and inactions, they are liable for all damages resulting from the hostile work environment.
- 90. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions and inactions, Plaintiff
 has and continues to suffer loss of income, loss of benefits, and other financial losses.
- 91. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions and inactions, Plaintiff
 has and continues to suffer pain, suffering, and emotional distress.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, exacerbation of his physical conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

THIRD COUNT (NJLAD - Retaliation)

- 92. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
- 93. Following Plaintiff 's reasonable and good faith complaints of the hostile work environment, Defendants retaliated against him.
- 94. Defendants provided bogus and illegal charges and discipline in an attempt to dissuades and otherwise silence Plaintiff from pursuing his complaints and objections.

- 95. Defendants' retaliation was meant to coerce, intimidate, threaten and/or interfere with the exercise or enjoyment of his rights protected by the NJLAD in violation of N.J.S.A. 10:5-12d.
- 96. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' actions, Plaintiff has and continues to suffer loss of income, loss of benefits, and other financial losses.
- 97. As a result of Defendants' actions, Plaintiff has suffered and continues to suffer personal injury and exacerbation of pre-existing conditions.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, exacerbation of his physical conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

FOURTH COUNT (NJLAD - Disability Discrimination)

- 98. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
 - Plaintiff
 suffered from a disability as recognized by the NJLAD.
 - Defendants knew that Plaintiff
 suffered from a disabling condition.
- 101. The adverse action taken by Defendants against Plaintiff as a result of his disability is in violation of the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination, N.J.S.A. 10:5-1, et seq.
- 102. As a result of Plaintiff sweet worngful termination, he has suffered economic loss, loss of enjoyment of life, pain and suffering, exacerbation of personal injury and personal injury.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, personal physical injury, exacerbation of his physical injuries and conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

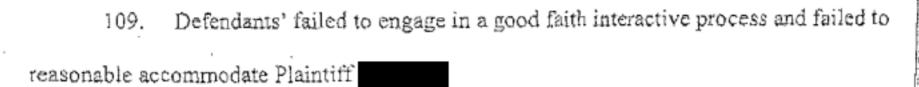
FIFTH COUNT (NJLAD - Perceived Disability Discrimination)

- 103. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
- 104. Defendants disparately treated and harassed Plaintiff seemed's employment because of his perceived disabilities in violation of the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination.
- 105. As a result of Defendants' unlawful conduct, Plaintiff has experienced economic losses, pain and suffering, physical injuries and exacerbation of physical injuries.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, exacerbation of his physical conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

(NJLAD - Failure to Accommodate)

- 106. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
- 107. Defendants knew Plaintiff suffered from a disability in connection with his hip replacement surgery in 2012.
- 108. Following Plaintiff surgery, he requested assistance with some of the essential functions of his job.



110. As a result of Defendants' unlawful conduct, Plaintiff has experienced economic losses, pain and suffering, physical injuries and exacerbation of physical injuries.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, exacerbation of his physical conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

SEVENTH COUNT (NJLAD-Constructive Discharge)

- 111. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
 - 112. Defendants created and maintained an intolerable working environment.
- 113. This intolerable environment was adversely affecting Plaintiff and a mental and physical help.
- 114. Despite his complaints and other efforts, Plaintiff could not escape the intolerable environment.
 - 115. As a result of the intolerable environment, Plaintiff was forced to resign.
- 116. As a result of Defendants' unlawful conduct, Plaintiff has experienced economic losses, pain and suffering, physical injuries and exacerbation of physical injuries

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff lemands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, exacerbation of his physical conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

EIGHTH COUNTY (NJLAD - Individual Liability)

- 117. Plaintiff repeats and realleges the previous allegations as though set forth at length herein.
 - Defendants Koble and Italiano are supervisors under the NJLAD.
- 119. In their capacity as supervisors, Defendants Koble and Italiano aided and abetted the discriminatory and retaliatory actions.
- 120. Defendants Koble and Italiano engaged in active and purposeful discrimination and retaliation in violation of N.J.S.A. 10:5-1, et seq.
- 121. As a result of Defendants' unlawful conduct, Plaintiff has experienced economic losses, pain and suffering, physical injuries and exacerbation of physical injuries.

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff demands judgment against Defendants for back pay, front pay, compensatory damages, exacerbation of his physical conditions, punitive damages, interest, negative tax consequences as a result of any jury verdict, counsel fees, costs of suit, and such other relief as the Court may deem appropriate.

NIEDWESKE BARBER HAGER, LLC

Attorneys for Plaintiff Myles Bartuska

By: Kevin Barber

Dated: [2 Jul 13

JURY DEMAND

Plaintiff

hereby demands trial by jury on all issues.

NIEDWESKE BARBER HAGER, LLC

Attorneys for Plaintiff Myles Bartuska

Ву:

Kevin Barber

Dated:

12 Jul 13

DESIGNATION OF TRIAL ATTORNEY

Kevin Barber, Esq. is hereby designated as trial counsel in the within matter.

NIEDWESKE BARBER HAGER, LLC

Attorneys for Plaintiff Myles Bartuska

Bv

Kevin Barber

Dated:

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO RULE 4:5-1

I, Kevin Barber, certify as follows:

I am a partner in the Law Firm of Niedweske Barber Hager, LLC, attorneys for Plaintiff in this matter. To the best of my knowledge, the matter in controversy is not the subject of any other action pending or contemplated in any court or arbitration proceeding, and no parties are known who should be joined in this action.

I certify that the foregoing statements made by me are true. I am aware that if any of the foregoing statements made by me are willfully false, I am subject to punishment.

NIEDWESKE BARBER HAGER, LLC
Attorneys for Plaintiff

Ву:

Dated:

Appendix XII-B1

CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT

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	CIVIL CASE IN	FORMATIO	N STATEME	TM	PARTUSE BY CLARKS	Committee of the Commit
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ATTORNEY SIGNATURE:

CIVIL CASE INFORMATION STATEMENT

	Use for initial plead	(CIS) ings (not motions) under Rule 4:5-1	
CASE TYPES	(Choose one and enter number of case typ	e in appropriate space on the reverse side.)	
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NIEDMERKE BYBEK LC

07/22/2013 09:25 FAX 9734010061

MERCER COUNTY COURTHOUSE CIVIL CASE MANAGMENT OPFICE TISTISTOR NO USESS-2065

571-4490 COURT TELEPHONE NO. (609)

TRACK ASSIGNMENT NOTICE

DATE: JULY 16, 2013
RE:
POCKET: MER L -001494 13

DISCOVERY IS 450 DAYS AND RUNS FROM THE FIRST ANSWER OR 90 DAYS SERVICE ON THE FIRST DEFENDANT, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST. TRACK 3. THE ABOVE CARE HAS BEEN ASSIGNED TO:

HON ANTHORY M. MASSI THE PRETRIAL JUDGE ASSIGNED IS:

TROM

TR YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT TEAM (609) 571-4475. Z,

03.2

CERTIFICATION OF GOOD CRUSE WITHIN 30 DAYS OF THE FILING OF YOUR PLADING.
PLAINTIFF MUST SERVE COPIES OF THIS FORM ON ALL OTHER PARTIES IN ACCORDANCE MITH R.4:52-2.

MYLES R. BARTUSKA ATTENTION:

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JUMBUNG